

DETERMINING PRIORITY NEEDS FOR TRAINING WOMEN LEADERS  
IN THE HAWAII NEW HOPE CHURCHES

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To Rick

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## **ABSTRACT**

Major sociological shifts in the role of women in North American society in recent decades have challenged the evangelical Church to reexamine its perspective regarding the role of women in church leadership. Different theological views have emerged, and women find themselves in churches generally described by one of the following: 1) women are limited from senior positions; 2) women lead in senior positions, including Senior Pastor; and 3) women are permitted to lead in senior positions, but a significant gap exists between held values and actual practice.

New Hope churches in Hawaii affirm a full and equal leadership for men and women, yet a gap is evident in the practice of this value. The lack of trained women in this relatively young revival movement is a contributing factor, so the need exists to equip women at various levels of leadership, including senior positions. This project investigates priority needs for training women leaders in New Hope churches.

A course was created to equip women leaders in New Hope churches, and to lessen the gap between values held and actual leadership practice. Determining the priority needs for developing these women leaders was a strategic part of designing the course. Four topics were identified: 1) how has God designed women for ministry?; 2) what does the Bible reveal about women in leadership?; 3) what life stages do women experience and what are their corresponding needs?; and 4) what are personal strengths and leadership style and how do they affect team building? Leaders were surveyed before and after the course regarding their priority needs. Data was analyzed and utilized to increase the effectiveness of training women leaders for their God-given calling in New Hope churches.



## CHAPTER 1

### THE PROBLEM AND ITS SETTING

#### **Controversy in the Evangelical Church on the Role of Women in Leadership**

Major sociological shifts in the role of women in North American society in recent decades have challenged the evangelical Church to reexamine its views regarding the role of women in the church, and especially in church leadership. Some evangelicals have reaffirmed traditional biblical interpretations that subordinate women to men.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the classic text supporting this view is 1 Timothy 2:12, which seems to prohibit women from teaching or exercising authority over men. Yet a growing volume of biblical scholarship has challenged the traditional view.<sup>2</sup> Recent research has shed light on 1 Timothy 2:7-15,<sup>3</sup> which is a difficult passage for any interpreter, and offered alternative interpretations.

Different theological views have emerged out of this interpretive debate.

“Complementarian” is the preferred title for those whose interpretation of Scripture is that men and women are created equally in God’s image, yet God has ordained distinct roles for men and women. These roles are complementary in nature but involve women

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<sup>1</sup> For example, John Piper and Wayne Grudem, *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood: A Response to Evangelical Feminism* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1991). More recently, in May of 2007 the Gospel Coalition was organized and directed by forty theologians and pastors, including notable leaders such as D.A. Carson, Tim Keller, John Piper and Mark Driscoll. Their goal is to renew evangelical commitment to core confessional beliefs, including the view that men are to lead churches and homes. See Collin Hansen, “Tethered to the Center: The Gospel Coalition is committed to core evangelical beliefs and wide-ranging cultural engagement,” *Christianity Today*, October, 2007, 70-71.

<sup>2</sup> For example, Ronald Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis published *Discovering Biblical Equality: Complementarity Without Hierarchy* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004), which challenged, chapter by chapter, Piper and Grudem’s work mentioned above.

<sup>3</sup> Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger present thorough and well-documented research concerning the cultural background of this text in *I Suffer Not a Woman: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992).

being in submission to men. Other terms used to refer to this view are “traditional” and “hierarchical.” On the other hand, “egalitarians” believe that, in addition to the sexes being created equally in God’s image to complement each other, men and women are called by God to serve equally in the home and in the church. In terms of the general inter-relationship of gender, women are not under the authority of men.

Because of this controversy and, for some, the changing theological landscape of the evangelical Church regarding women in leadership, women find themselves in congregations generally described by one of the following: 1) churches that limit the leadership of women from senior positions; 2) churches that actively affirm women leading in senior positions, including Senior Pastor; and 3) churches that theoretically permit women to lead in senior positions, but where a significant gap exists between held values and actual practice.

### **The Thesis**

Despite the differences held regarding the sphere of women’s leadership, all churches will surely agree on the need to equip and release the God-given gifts and potential of women for some kinds of leadership ministry.

New Hope churches in Hawaii are certainly committed to this biblical ministry. In their context, women are permitted to lead in senior positions, theoretically. Yet a significant gap exists in New Hope churches between the values held and actual practice. The lack of trained women in this relatively young revival movement is a contributing factor, so the need exists to equip women at various levels of leadership, including senior

positions. An essential question in designing such training is “what are the priority needs for developing women leaders in New Hope churches?”

Because this is the first venture specifically targeting women’s leadership development in New Hope congregations, a strategic aspect is to identify the priority elements for equipping these women. This study will determine the priority needs for training women leaders in New Hope churches. The goal is to strengthen one important aspect of an already vibrant spiritual movement, and to help lessen the gap between values and practice in women’s leadership.

### **The Need for Developing Women Leaders in the Local Church**

The development of leaders is a vital need for any thriving church. The development of healthy and mature leaders, both men and women, will produce strong and growing ministries.

### **The Need for Developing Women Leaders in New Hope Churches in Hawaii**

New Hope congregations in Hawaii are a growing and vibrant movement, driven by evangelism and church planting. Under the dynamic leadership of founding Pastor Wayne Cordeiro, New Hope Christian Fellowship ([www.enewhope.org](http://www.enewhope.org)) was planted in Honolulu in 1995. This founding church has grown to a weekend attendance of 12,000 in multiple sites, and has launched thirty church plants in the Hawaiian Islands. Additionally, the movement has spread internationally to plant churches in the Pacific

Rim and west coast of the United States.<sup>4</sup> The growth of New Hope churches, in Hawaii alone, is unprecedented in the history of revival movements in the State.

New Hope churches are under the denominational affiliation of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, which was founded by a woman (Aimee Semple McPherson) and affirms women serving as Senior Pastors. So one might expect in such an environment that women's leadership would flourish; yet an examination of the churches indicates otherwise<sup>5</sup>. In a setting of remarkable church revival and growth, it is a noteworthy observation that men occupy all the senior leadership positions at New Hope Christian Fellowship, and that all of the New Hope church plants are led by male Senior Pastors. This, in itself, indicates a need to close the gap between denominational values and the practice of women's pastoral leadership.

In addition, the movement has lacked any equipping programs specifically designed for the leadership development needs of women. Compelling reasons for training women in some contexts apart from men include: 1) it provides an environment where women are free to discuss biblical issues without male-dominated traditional interpretations and applications;<sup>6</sup> 2) women possess different learning styles from men;<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A listing of 53 New Hope Churches that are part of this movement may be found at <http://www.enewhope.org/index.php/locations/>.

<sup>5</sup> Results from the doctoral assignment, *The Position of the Foursquare Denomination and New Hope Christian Fellowship*, detailed the participation of women in spiritual leadership at New Hope Oahu and revealed staff ministry positions are held in a ratio of seventy-eight percent men and twenty-two percent women. New Hope church plants in the Hawaiian Islands exhibit the same general patterns of women in staff leadership as their mother church.

<sup>6</sup> Walter Liefeld addresses the intensity, confusion and conflict that occurs when traditionalists and egalitarians begin with their own own assumptions, drawn from a complex of biblical texts and personal convictions, *Women and the Nature of Ministry*, JETS 30/1 (March 1987), 49-61.

<sup>7</sup> Belinky, Clinchy, Goldburger and Tarule identify five stages of self, voice, and mind development that are distinctively female, and take a deep and detailed look into each of the five ways of knowing, *Women's Ways of Knowing*, (New York, NY: Basicbooks, 1986), 23 – 131.

and 3) research supports “feminine principles” of leading an organization.<sup>8</sup> It is, therefore, strategic to identify women’s distinctive needs and prepare them more effectively for their God-given calling in ministries throughout the congregation, including positions of senior leadership.

### **The Setting for Developing Women Leaders in New Hope Churches in Hawaii**

Evangelistic fruitfulness has been a providential feature of the rapid increase of New Hope churches. The result is a significant need for developing healthy and mature leaders who will disciple the stream of new believers.

In order to meet this need, Pastor Wayne Cordeiro has emphasized leadership development on a broad level. The primary means by which Pastor Cordeiro has developed men and women leaders, both within his own church and also to spearhead church plants, is through mentoring, practica and founding New Hope Christian College. The College’s mission is to disciple emerging Christian leaders. Pastor Cordeiro’s leadership has truly been apostolic in nature, implementing evangelism and church planting, and has proven to be a significant gift to the broader Church.

### **The Core Values of New Hope Churches in Hawaii**

In *Doing Church as a Team*,<sup>9</sup> Pastor Cordeiro shares his core passions and values.<sup>10</sup> The title states the primary value embedded in New Hope churches, and a significant element in their impact around the Pacific Rim. Cordeiro has effectively

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<sup>8</sup> Sally Helgeson, *The Female Advantage: Women’s Ways of Leadership* (New York, NY: Currency Doubleday, 1995).

<sup>9</sup> Wayne Cordeiro, *Doing Church as a Team* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> A complete listing of New Hope’s Core Values may be found at <http://enewhope.org/aboutus/corevalues/>.

launched a movement wedding two powerful biblical principles: 1) the church's mission of evangelism; and 2) the calling and gifting of every member to participate in the mission.

With the acronym DCAT ("Doing Church as a Team"), Cordeiro captures in athletic imagery the biblical vision of the Body of Christ - the tangible presence of the risen Christ on earth in the church to fulfill the Great Commission. The value of every member offering their gifts in service to the mission of winning people to Christ, and the importance of building ministry teams, combine to create a primary distinctive of the New Hope DNA.

Cordeiro's gift of inspiration is evident in the way he communicates the vision. He calls the church to be an environment for "releasing dreams." The God-given dreams that people possess in their hearts, if mobilized and aligned toward a common, God-glorifying purpose, can transform a church into a powerful army for the Lord. This framework of vision encourages both men and women, but nevertheless the gap existing in senior women's leadership indicates the need to release those God-given dreams.

One of the key elements to the effective evangelism of New Hope congregations has been their intentional utilization of ministry forms that are relevant to contemporary culture. For both men and women, creativity is utilized in various artistic forms (music, drama, video, dance, etc.) to communicate the message of Christ to people in meaningful ways. The expressed intent is to relate to the culture through redeeming the arts while remaining true to the Scriptures. This allows the gospel to be presented in such a way that it reaches the heart.

The environment in which the mission is carried out is spiritually motivated and highly relational. A culture is built and continually cultivated that focuses on serving God from the heart, and giving him one's best. Serving on ministry teams, for both men and women, provides a relational setting in which people experience genuine care. The result is a sense of spiritual family, far beyond a group of individuals who simply share a common task.

Thus the core values of New Hope churches have combined together to provide rich soil in which kingdom ministry has flourished, for both men and women. Yet the need exists within the church culture to create programs specifically aimed to address the needs of women in leadership development.

### **Developing Women Leaders in the Church: Changing Attitudes, Behavior and Values**

Ronald Heifetz' work, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*,<sup>11</sup> is a valuable resource providing sage insight applicable to those engaged with developing women leaders in the church. The author's discernment is rooted in scholarly research that results in practical prescriptions for students who are seeking to implement leadership in a variety of situations, from personal social interaction to the highest public offices.

Heifetz asserts that a crisis of leadership exists in many areas of public and private life. Yet people too readily attribute problems to leaders, politicians and executives, as if they are the cause of them. In crisis, people tend to look for the wrong kind of leadership, someone who can make hard problems simple, rather than for leadership that will

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<sup>11</sup> Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994). This book is the product of a decade of Heifetz' teaching leadership classes to practitioners at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University.

challenge the culture to face problems for which there are no simple, painless solutions. The author thus calls for a new kind of leadership, one that makes progress on problems by changing attitudes, behavior and values. Such leadership requires people to learn new ways.

This is precisely the social context and the kind of leadership required by women who would seek to develop women leaders in many churches. It is most notable in churches where there is controversy and even opposition to women in leadership, or churches where there is a gap between beliefs held and actual practice in women's leadership.

Heifetz makes two key distinctions, both of which have significant ramifications for women's leadership development. First, he distinguishes between technical and adaptive problems, the former dealing with routine problems and the latter demanding innovation and learning changes in values, beliefs or behavior. Developing women leaders is surely an adaptive problem, requiring innovation and learning versus a simple prescription to "fix it."

The second distinction is between leadership and authority, which provides a framework for assessing resources and developing a leadership strategy depending on whether one has or does not have authority. This distinction is particularly helpful for the work at hand, since many seeking to develop women's leadership in the church will be working in a context of possessing authority without a position of leadership. Liefeld identifies three types of authority, and notes that women often have *de facto* authority, or strong influence, even if they do not possess assigned authority to an office or position.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Walter Liefeld, "Women and the Nature of Ministry," *JETS* 30/1 (March 1987): 56.



Although Heifetz addresses leadership from a purely secular perspective, with evolutionary science as a world view, readers committed to biblical truth will find a wealth of insight from his theory and prescriptions. Of noteworthy interest is his premise defining authority in terms of service, and his affirmation that authority is a trust. These are thoroughly Christian values.

Heifetz differentiates between two meanings of leadership: influencing the community to follow a leader's vision, versus influencing the community to face its problems. This second meaning of leadership is at the heart of the book. Leaders mobilize people to tackle social problems, and progress on those problems is the measure of leadership. Responsibility lies with both the leader and the community. Leadership is thus defined not as a position of authority or a personal set of character traits, but rather as an activity of mobilizing people to do adaptive work.

Adaptive work consists of the learning required to address conflicts in the values people hold, or to diminish the gap between the values people stand for and the reality they face. It requires a change in values, beliefs or behavior. It involves not only the assessment of reality but also the clarification of values.

Influence and authority are primary factors in doing adaptive work. Authority is defined as conferred power to perform a service. As such, authority is a trust: it is given, and it can be taken away if the leader fails to meet terms of the exchange.

Heifetz' work offers tremendous value to those implementing women's leadership in the church, and is significant for the project at hand in the following ways. First, defining leadership in terms of adaptive work is a notable insight. This approach accurately reflects the need in the church at large, where conflicts exist in the values

people hold on women in leadership, or where the gap needs to be diminished between the values people affirm and the reality they face. Within the New Hope community, some conflicting values exist concerning women's leadership roles in the church.

Viewing leadership as mobilizing people to do adaptive work does not forsake the perspective of leadership as visionary activity. Heifetz recognizes the need for leaders to clarify and articulate a community's guiding values. He affirms the value of charismatic leaders binding people together by communicating values and hopes, weaving those hopes into an image of the future, and providing energy, strategy and faith that the vision can be realized. However, he also recognizes the larger context and need to sustain adaptive change by the community discovering and developing its own capacity for adaptive work.

Interestingly, Heifetz' approach affirms the two elements prescribed by the Bible's inspired dynamic for leadership in the Church: the unique role of leaders to mobilize people, and the work of the community to effect lasting change, which can be seen in Ephesians 4:11-16.

A second key insight Heifetz offers is the distinction between leading with authority and leading without authority, the latter recognized as not having received much attention in leadership research and discussion. Heifetz' assertion that leadership without authority is "the domain to which women have been restricted for ages"<sup>13</sup> rings true in the broader culture. It will also resonate with many in the Evangelical church. For this reason, his recommendations for leading without authority are particularly valuable for women who are developing women leaders in the church.

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<sup>13</sup> Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), 184.

Heifetz discusses several principles that apply to both situations, leading with or without authority. His prescriptions are to identify the adaptive challenge, keep distress within a productive range, direct attention to ripening issues and not diversions, give the work back to the people, and protect voices of leadership in the community. However, leaders who lead without authority must adopt strategies that are at once more bold and subtle. Heifetz advises: 1) regulate distress by modulating the provocation, one barometer of systemic distress being the behavior of people in senior positions of authority; 2) take into account the special vulnerability of becoming a lightning rod, drawing attention and then deflecting it to the questions and issues that need to be faced; and 3) strategize to mobilize the stakeholders, rather than assuming that only the authority figure has the power to effect change.

A third profound insight emerges from Heifetz' perspective. Since making progress on adaptive problems requires changed values, attitudes and behaviors, a central task of leadership consists of directing learning processes. Leadership, with or without authority, requires an educative strategy so that the community learns new ways. This truth affirms the value of the work at hand. An educative strategy for equipping New Hope women leaders is achieved by identifying their priority needs.

The Scriptures are the essential foundation for building an educative strategy that will change attitudes, values and behaviors in the Church regarding women's leadership.<sup>14</sup>

In summary, amidst the shifting views regarding women's leadership in evangelicalism, all can agree on the significant and strategic need to equip women for some kinds of leadership. New Hope churches in Hawaii need to lessen the gap that

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<sup>14</sup> 2 Tim 3:16 (NIV).

exists between values held and actual practice in women's leadership. A key element in training women to serve New Hope churches is identifying their priority needs in leadership development. Equipping such leaders requires changing attitudes, behaviors and attitudes. This calls for leadership that mobilizes people to make progress on the issue, operates with or without authority, and directs learning processes through an educative strategy.

## CHAPTER 2

### THE THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATION FOR DEVELOPING WOMEN LEADERS IN THE CHURCH

The theological foundation for developing women leaders in the church encompasses both the strategic value of developing leaders for God's Kingdom and the biblical basis for women exercising leadership. These will both be addressed, in turn.

#### **The Strategic Value of Leadership in the Church**

Throughout Scripture, God works to accomplish his purposes on earth in and through people. In the process, he calls leaders to play a vital role. In the Old Testament era, God's major movements in history are all associated with leaders: Abraham and the calling of a people; Moses and the redemption of a covenant nation; Joshua and the conquest of the Promised Land; David and the united monarchy; Ezra and the restoration; to name a few. In addition to these major leaders, God calls countless men and women to exercise leadership in their smaller circles of influence in order to advance his Kingdom.

In the New Testament, God uses the bold preaching and leadership of Peter to give birth to the Church,<sup>1</sup> and the courageous leadership of Paul to advance the gospel to the Gentile world.<sup>2</sup> But along with these Apostolic leaders, the progress of the Great Commission<sup>3</sup> requires the appointment of emerging leaders within the church.<sup>4</sup> The vital role of leadership at all levels, then, is observed in the advance of God's Kingdom on earth.

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<sup>1</sup> Acts 1-12.

<sup>2</sup> Acts 13-28.

<sup>3</sup> Matt 28:18-20.

<sup>4</sup> Acts 6:1-7; Acts 14:23; Titus 1:5.

## **Developing Leaders for the Church**

Jesus' devotion to the training of the Twelve, in preparation for launching the Church following his resurrection and ascension, models the need for leadership development in the local church. Though leadership is a gift and calling, mature and skilled spiritual leaders are not born. They are developed.

The Apostle Paul's practice of appointing leaders in the local church,<sup>5</sup> and his instruction concerning their qualifications,<sup>6</sup> underscores the need for leadership development in the body of Christ. He identifies leadership as a spiritual gift,<sup>7</sup> which, like other spiritual gifts, is given for the benefit of the church body.<sup>8</sup> Yet leadership, also like other spiritual gifts, must be developed in the life of the recipient.

Additional New Testament revelation elaborates the essential dynamic of leadership gifts operating for the growth of the church. The risen Christ calls and gifts a variety of leaders (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor-teachers) with the specific purpose of equipping believers to carry out their God-given service.<sup>9</sup> The result is the fulfillment of God's individual plans for people's lives,<sup>10</sup> as well as the growth towards maturity of the larger body of Christ.<sup>11</sup> Each generation of gifted apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor-teachers must be mentored to achieve their divine calling of equipping members of the body. The operation of this powerful leadership dynamic thus calls for the local church to engage leadership development, for both men and women.

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<sup>5</sup> Acts 14:23.

<sup>6</sup> 1 Tim 3:1-13; Titus 1:5-9.

<sup>7</sup> Rom 12:8.

<sup>8</sup> 1 Cor 12:7.

<sup>9</sup> Eph 4:11-13.

<sup>10</sup> Eph 2:10.

<sup>11</sup> Eph 4:12-13.

That leads to the question regarding the exercise of women's leadership in the church.

### **Hermeneutics and the Exercise of Women's Leadership in the Church**

The reason why controversy exists in the Church concerning the spheres in which women are called to exercise leadership is because of differing interpretations of certain biblical passages. In this regard, it is essential to recognize two interpretive principles that are rooted in the Evangelical Church's commitment to "God-breathed" Scripture.<sup>12</sup>

The first is that the interpreter's task is to let God's Word speak for itself, not to read into the Bible one's preconceived ideas and values. This requires exegesis, the practice of leading the meaning out of the text, based on the meaning of words in their context. It also requires the interpreter to challenge his or her own thinking. The goal is to ensure that the text is approached objectively, rather than with the aim of proving a particular view determined in advance.

A second interpretive principle of vital importance is "the analogy of faith". Based on the Evangelical perspective that the Bible has one Author,<sup>13</sup> who does not contradict himself, various passages on women's leadership in the church must be understood as not being in opposition to each other. Where there seems to be a contradiction, unclear or controversial passages must be interpreted in the light of clear passages.

With these interpretive principles in mind, the following discussion will begin with biblical principles which are clear, and move to those which are more controversial. It is recognized that what is considered clear to this interpreter will not be without

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<sup>12</sup> 2 Tim 3:16.

<sup>13</sup> 2 Tim 3:16

disagreement by some. Nevertheless, a case will be made that the more clear (less disputed) principles are: 1) in creation, men and women are equally created in the image of God, and equally called to service; 2) in Christ, men and women are spiritually equal, and equally commissioned to the work of making disciples; 3) there is no gender distinction in the Holy Spirit's gifting of the Church to carry out Christ's mission.

The controversial and disputed passages that will be addressed relate to: 1) the meaning of male as "head"; and 2) the interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:12, an apparent prohibition of women teaching and exercising authority over men.

### **In Creation, Men and Women are Equally Created and Called to Service**

Genesis 1 records God's creation of humankind with constitutional equality, male and female being fashioned equally in the image of God.<sup>14</sup> Further, both men and women are equally commissioned to serve their Creator by exercising his dominion over the created order.<sup>15</sup> There is thus no hierarchical structure of authority between the genders in God's original created order, nor role distinctions in carrying out God's mission.

Some interpreters have tried to make the case that the creation of Adam, first chronologically,<sup>16</sup> is an indication of God's design for a hierarchy of authority in gender relationships. Although this idea seems to be supported by 1 Timothy 2:12-13, admittedly a difficult passage which will be addressed below, three contextual factors would negate this view. First, Genesis 1:26-28 clearly indicates the foundational equality of the sexes in constitution and service. The means by which God created the first man and woman

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<sup>14</sup> Gen 1:27.

<sup>15</sup> Gen 1:26-28.

<sup>16</sup> Genesis 2:4-25 is a "telescoped" record of the sixth creation day (Genesis 1:24-31), elaborating on the details of God's creation of the first man and woman.



would not contradict this clear revelation. Secondly, the creation of the woman out of the man's side<sup>17</sup> signifies equality in relationship, not an inferior rank of authority. And thirdly, if first in chronology indicates elevated authority in creation, then the animal kingdom would be endowed with authority over humankind. Being created first does not necessarily mean superior authority. This line of reason breaks down in the creation account, itself.

Complementarians themselves have pointed out that the verb Paul uses for Adam and Eve's creation is not *ktizo* (create), but *plasso* (form, as in educational formation). He is not speaking about the chronological order of creation, but rather the fact that God gave Adam the information about the tree before Eve was created. Adam had "education" directly from God that Eve lacked.

The creation of the first woman as the man's "helper"<sup>18</sup> cannot be understood correctly as a subordinate rank. The word is most often used of God in his relationship with humankind,<sup>19</sup> which is certainly not an inferior status. Rather, in context, it further conveys equality between the man and woman. She is created to complete the man in a complementary fashion, bringing strengths to the relationship which he lacks. Because of her equal status and complementary nature, the two of them are stronger together in their relationship and service to God. Whereas it is "not good" for the man to be alone,<sup>20</sup> it is "very good" for them to be together.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Gen 2:21-22.

<sup>18</sup> Hebrew *'ezer*, Gen 2:18.

<sup>19</sup> Fifteen of the nineteen times *'ezer* is used in the Old Testament, it refers to the help that only God can give. For example: Exodus 18:4; Deuteronomy 33:7, 26, 29; Psalm 20:2, 33:20; 121:1-2.

<sup>20</sup> Gen 2:18.

<sup>21</sup> Gen 1:31.

In considering God's design for male and female relationships in the creation account, it is important to note that Genesis 3:18 records God's judgment for the couple's rebellion. The man's "ruling over" the woman is part of the judgment of sin, not a God-given sanction for men's authority over women. Such male domination, like all effects of sin, is reversed through the Cross of Christ.<sup>22</sup>

God's original design for gender relationships, then, is clearly that of equality in nature and mission. There is no hierarchy of authority, or distinctive roles in service, between men and women in creation.

### **In the Church, Men and Women are Equal in Spiritual Standing**

In the Church, men and women are created spiritual equals.<sup>23</sup> Their spiritual standing in Christ is equally based upon God's grace and received through faith.<sup>24</sup> A key passage affirming this truth is Galatians 3:26-29:

"So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The Apostle Paul states specifically that there are no gender distinctions for membership in God's family, along with no ethnic and social distinctions. All who belong to Christ through faith are spiritual equals, without such relational barriers. The Apostle Peter, further, instructs husbands to live out this truth by honoring their wives as "fellow heirs of the grace of life."<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> 2 Cor 5:17.

<sup>23</sup> 2 Cor 5:17; Eph 2:10.

<sup>24</sup> Eph 2:8-9.

<sup>25</sup> 1Pet 3:7.

Although some may seek to differentiate between men and women's equal spiritual standing in Christ and yet their distinctive roles in leadership, this distinction does not pass the test of reason. Based on Galatians 3:26-29, if gender distinctions warrant differences in authority or leadership roles, so would distinctions in ethnicity and social rank. This is clearly antithetical to the vision of the Church. In other words, equality of spiritual standing in Christ implies equality of service.

### **In the Church, Men and Women are Equally Commissioned to Serve**

Under the banner of his absolute authority, the risen Christ commissions both men and women to make disciples of all the nations.<sup>26</sup> King Jesus invests his authority equally in men and women when he issues marching orders to the Church. There are no gender distinctions given in the work of declaring the gospel, baptizing believers in the triune God and instructing them to obey Jesus's commands.

The Gospel accounts all record the fact that the first evangelists were women.<sup>27</sup> This, in itself, is remarkable, and an apologetic for the Christian faith. If someone were to conspire to fabricate a story about Jesus's resurrection, they would not choose to have women announce the pivotal event. Women's inferior social and legal standing in first century Judaism would not lend credibility to the report. Yet the historical record is consistent that the risen Christ chose and entrusted his message, first, to women.

Women's initial participation in declaring Christ's resurrection is further built upon in the launch of the New Testament mission, as women and men share together in the work of the Church. For example, Philip's four daughters serve as prophetesses in

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<sup>26</sup> Matt 28:18-20.

<sup>27</sup> Matt 28:5-10; Mark 16:1-11; Luke 24:1-11; John 20:10-18.

Caesarea.<sup>28</sup> Phoebe is a deaconess of the Cenchrean church and the Apostle Paul's letter carrier to the church in Rome.<sup>29</sup> Paul calls Junia an outstanding apostle, who had been a fellow prisoner with him.<sup>30</sup> Priscilla is a church planter and teacher who labors alongside Paul.<sup>31</sup> She, along with her husband Aquila, teach Apollos the way of God more adequately.<sup>32</sup> Women actively pray and prophesy in the church at Corinth.<sup>33</sup> Nympha hosts a church in her home.<sup>34</sup> Paul greets many women workers in his letters to the churches, recognizing their importance in serving Christ.

The New Testament thus records the Lord of the church commissioning men and women equally under his authority to do the work of the Church. His command is followed by the vibrant and active service of men and women co-laboring together in the mission.

### **The Holy Spirit Equally Gifts Men and Women for the Mission**

Several New Testament passages reveal that the Holy Spirit gifts members of the body of Christ for his mission.<sup>35</sup> These spiritual gifts are given for the benefit of the entire church,<sup>36</sup> so that the whole body will be built up to maturity.<sup>37</sup> It is both clear, and noteworthy, that gender distinctions are entirely absent in any New Testament revelation concerning spiritual gifts. All spiritual gifts, including the gifts of teaching and leadership, are designed and given for the benefit of the entire church, not just one

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<sup>28</sup> Acts 21:19

<sup>29</sup> Rom 16:1-2.

<sup>30</sup> Rom 16:7.

<sup>31</sup> Rom 16:3.

<sup>32</sup> Acts 18:26.

<sup>33</sup> 1 Cor 11:4-5.

<sup>34</sup> Col 4:15.

<sup>35</sup> Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor 12:1-31; Eph 4:7-13; 1 Pet 4:10-11.

<sup>36</sup> 1 Cor 12:7.

<sup>37</sup> Eph 4:11-16.

segment of it. There simply are no male/female differences in the assignment of spiritual gifts, nor instruction limiting their use in the body of Christ. On the contrary, men and women together are commanded to "...use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."<sup>38</sup>

Having considered the clear biblical principles of men and women's equal status in spiritual standing and service, the controversial passages will now be addressed. These pertain to male as "head" (*kephale*) and Paul's command prohibiting women from teaching and exercising authority over men.<sup>39</sup>

### **Does Male Headship Mean "Authority?"**

Two New Testament passages mention male as "head." One refers to the relationship between men and women in the church.<sup>40</sup> The other refers to the relationship between a husband and wife in marriage.<sup>41</sup> In each case, the Greek word *kephale*, translated "head," expresses the male's relationship with the female.

Before examining the meaning of this word in these passages, it is important to note two hermeneutical factors. First, the Greek word *kephale* is capable of various meanings, just as its translation "head" can have different meanings in the English language. Secondly, the meanings of words are determined by usage, and context is always the key to interpreting the meaning of a word in a given passage.

The traditional or complementarian view interprets *kephale* to mean "authority." According to this view, men are given a leadership role in their relationship with women,

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<sup>38</sup> 1 Pet 4:10.

<sup>39</sup> 1 Tim 2:12.

<sup>40</sup> 1 Cor 11:3.

<sup>41</sup> Eph 5:23.

both in the church and in marriage. Women's complementary role is to submit to male authority. God's plan for the social order is thus a hierarchy of authority. An example of this view is expressed in the Southern Baptist Convention:<sup>42</sup> "A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband."

A closer examination of *kephale*, however, when translated "authority" in these passages, reveals significant difficulties. Substituting "authority" for *kephale*, 1 Corinthians 11:3 would read, "But I want you to realize that the authority of every man is Christ, and the authority of the woman is man, and the authority of Christ is God." If a hierarchy of authority in relationships was intended, one wonders why the text presents the given order. That is, Christ possesses authority over men; men possess authority over women; God possesses authority over Christ. One would expect a hierarchy of authority to be presented as God to Christ, Christ to men, men to women.

Although the general notion of authority may be simply in view, it is difficult to compare Christ's authority over men and men's authority over women. The former is absolute, and based on a constitutional difference (God/Creator vs. created being). The Creator's absolute authority over his creatures is surely not the same as the (apparent) delegated authority given men over women. So why would Paul compare the two? Again, the creation account clearly reveals the essential equality between male and female, in nature and in service, and does not support a hierarchy of authority between the genders.

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<sup>42</sup> See *Baptist Press* (July 29, 1999) <[www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net)> The statement further says "the husband and wife are of equal worth before God," the husband "has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family." The wife is "to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation."

Even more significant, interpreting 1 Corinthians 11:3 as a hierarchy of authority in relationships runs the risk of contradicting the orthodox doctrine of the trinity.<sup>43</sup> Historically, the triune God has been understood to be comprised of three equal Persons – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – not a hierarchy of authority. For example, Philippians 2:5-11 reveals Christ’s constitutional equality with God. It is this very starting point - the essential equality between members of the Godhead - that inspires awe at the humility of the incarnation. Christ Jesus, “...being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant...” Following Jesus’s death and resurrection, the text indicates that “God exalted him to the highest place,” returning God the Son to his equal status with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit. Subordinating the Son to the Father in a hierarchy of authority, then, challenges orthodox theology regarding the triune God.

A further objection to this view is that, in the immediate context, Paul speaks about the equality and mutual interdependence between men and women. “Nevertheless, in the Lord woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman. For as woman came from man, so also man is born of woman. But everything comes from God.”<sup>44</sup> This equality and interdependence between the genders is inconsistent with headship meaning a superior rank of men’s authority over women.

Finally, the suggested hierarchy of authority in relationships contradicts a woman’s direct standing before Christ, established with clarity in New Testament passages cited above. A woman’s spiritual standing in Christ positions her to relate directly to her one authority, King Jesus. She does not have a mediating (male) authority

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<sup>43</sup> Kevin Giles addresses this issue in *Discovering Biblical Equality*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., gen. ed. Ronald W. Pierce and Rebecca Merrill Groothuis (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 334-352.

<sup>44</sup> 1 Cor 11:11-12.

between herself and Christ. “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus...”<sup>45</sup>

The meaning of *kephale* in Ephesians 5:23, for a husband in relation to his wife, is discussed in Appendix 1. A study of this passage yields the conclusion that male as “head” does not mean “authority.”

A second meaning of *kephale*, which some interpreters believe better explains the meaning of these passages, is “source.”

### **Does Male Headship Mean “Source?”**

Egalitarians interpret *kephale* as “source” or “fountainhead,” based on usage of the word with this meaning.<sup>46</sup> According to this view, 1 Corinthians 11:3 reads, “But I want you to realize that the source of every man is Christ, and the source of the woman is man, and the source of Christ is God.” Understood this way, the verse seems to make more sense. Adam, the representative of every man, was created by Christ.<sup>47</sup> Eve, the first woman, was created out of Adam.<sup>48</sup> And Christ came from God.<sup>49</sup>

The order of these *kephale* relationships can be explained as historical. First, Adam originated from Christ in creation.<sup>50</sup> Then Eve originated from Adam, being fashioned out of his side.<sup>51</sup> Later, Christ came from God into history in the incarnation.<sup>52</sup> Furthermore, this view fits nicely with Paul’s statement in 1 Corinthians 11:12, “For as

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<sup>45</sup> 1 Tim 2:5.

<sup>46</sup> Catherine Clark Kroeger makes a case for usage of *kephale* as “source” in “Appendix III: The Classical Concept of *Head* as ‘Source’”, *Equal to Serve*, Gretchen Gaebelein Hull (Old Tappan, NJ: Fleming H. Revell, 1987), 267.

<sup>47</sup> John 1:1-3.

<sup>48</sup> Gen 2:23.

<sup>49</sup> John 1:1, 14.

<sup>50</sup> Gen 2:7.

<sup>51</sup> Gen 2:21-23.

<sup>52</sup> John 1:1-2, 14.



the woman originates from the man, so also the man has his birth through the woman; and all things originate from God.”

The egalitarian view, however, is not without its problems. Careful consideration of this passage shows an inconsistency of reasoning. If Christ is the source of every man, by means of his creation of Adam, is he not also the source of every woman, since he also created Eve? Or, to be consistent, if Adam is the source of Eve because she found her physical origins in Adam’s side, would not Adam’s physical source be the dust out of which he was created?

To carry the analogy further, if physical origins are in view, as they surely are with Eve being sourced in Adam, then Mary’s role in Christ’s incarnation should be acknowledged. The Scriptures record that the Holy Spirit and Mary were the sources of Christ’s incarnation.<sup>53</sup> Physically, he was “born of a woman.”<sup>54</sup> (Galatians 4:4).

In Ephesians 5:23, where *kephale* describes a husband’s relationship with his wife, the meaning of “source” is not evident. In what sense is a husband the source of his wife? This meaning does not fit the passage’s portrayal of the marriage relationship as an application of Spirit-filled, mutual submission.

The egalitarian view has also been challenged linguistically. One scholar’s research indicates that in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, *kephale* never means “source.”<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, it is claimed that it rarely means “source” in ancient literature.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Matt 1:18; Luke 1:35.

<sup>54</sup> Gal 4:4.

<sup>55</sup> Wayne Grudem, “Appendix I: The Meaning of Kephale (“Head”): A Response to Recent Studies” in *Recovering Biblical Manhood and Womanhood*, ed. John Piper and Wayne Grudem (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1991), 428. See also Grudem’s more recent article “The Meaning of Kephale (“Head”): An Evaluation of New Evidence, Real and Alleged,” *The Journal of the Evangelical Society* 44, no. 1 (2001): 25-66.

### Does Male Headship Picture “Relational Unity?”

A third interpretation has been championed by Sarah Sumner.<sup>57</sup> In this view, *kephale* should be interpreted according to its normal meaning of a physical head.<sup>58</sup> The head and body imagery conveys relational unity or oneness. The “body,” in relation to the “head,” is also characterized by physical vulnerability.

This view is compelling because it best fits 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:23,<sup>59</sup> as well as the overall revelation of Scripture.

The meaning of *kephale* as relational unity, conveyed by the organic connection of head and body, harmonizes with 1 Corinthians 11:3. Christ’s headship of every man means that every man, relative to Christ, is a body, not a head. That is consistent with the entire church, male and female, being the body of Christ. The organic unity between Christ and the Church is suitably conveyed by the New Testament’s recurring references to believers being “in Christ.” Further, the Church’s feminine relationship to Christ in the imagery of bride and groom<sup>60</sup> is in concert with “every man” being in a metaphorically feminine relationship with Christ (body to head).

Men’s relationship with women in the congregation is also one of organic unity in Christ, pictured by the head/body. Christ’s death on the Cross effected a double sense of peace and unity, vertically between God and believers and also horizontally between

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<sup>56</sup> Grudem, “Appendix I”, 425. Evidence for *kephale* meaning “source” is given by Gordon Fee, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament, The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1987), 503.

<sup>57</sup> Sarah Sumner, *Men and Women in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 154-190.

<sup>58</sup> Sarah Sumner, *Men and Women in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 151. Sumner examines Grudem’s research and notes that in 98 percent of the usages of *kephale*, a physical head is pictured, rather than a metaphorical “person of superior authority or rank.”

<sup>59</sup> Appendix A discusses the marriage text.

<sup>60</sup> Rev 19:7.

believers in the Church.<sup>61</sup> Paul's overriding message in 1 Corinthians 11:2-16 is that men and women's practices in worship should honor that relational unity between fellow members of Christ's body.

In what sense, then, is God the "head" of Christ? In the trinity, the Father stands in relational unity with the Son. Both possess constitutional equality with each other.<sup>62</sup> Yet in his incarnation, Christ became the body of God. God is spirit,<sup>63</sup> yet "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us."<sup>64</sup> In his resurrection and ascension, Christ remains the fullness of deity in bodily form.<sup>65</sup> Christ's relational unity to God, then, can be pictured with the image of body to head.

Sumner observes that one aspect of the body/head imagery is that the body/feminine component of the relationship involves physical vulnerability. Women are created physically more vulnerable than men.<sup>66</sup> The Church (body) stands in a relationship of physical vulnerability to Christ (head).<sup>67</sup> And Christ, in his incarnation, is in a body/feminine relation to God (head). His physical vulnerability was evident in his experience of crucifixion.<sup>68</sup>

In addition, Sumner makes the case that the relational unity between the Father and Son is revealed in the Father's delight to honor the Son. God heads Christ by exalting him to reign as Creator, Redeemer and Judge.<sup>69</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> Eph 2:11-22.

<sup>62</sup> John 1:1; Phil 2:6.

<sup>63</sup> John 4:24.

<sup>64</sup> John 1:14.

<sup>65</sup> Col 2:9.

<sup>66</sup> 1 Pet 3:7.

<sup>67</sup> It is interesting to note that the account of Paul's conversion reveals this concept of relational unity between Christ and the Church. Although Paul was persecuting Christians (body), the risen Christ says "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me (head)?" Acts 9:4.

<sup>68</sup> 2 Cor 13:4.

<sup>69</sup> Sarah Sumner, *Men and Women in the Church* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 179.

The meaning of *kephale* is thus best understood to picture relational unity. This view fits the context of marriage (Ephesians 5:23) beautifully, and it harmonizes Paul's instruction concerning the relationship between men and women in the church.<sup>70</sup>

### **What About 1 Timothy 2:12?**

Having considered the controversial passages referring to male as “head” and concluded that the best evidence does not support male authority over women, attention will now be given to the passage that complementarians interpret to limit the leadership of women. The Apostle Paul states in 1 Timothy 2:11-15:

“A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. <sup>12</sup> I do not permit a woman to teach or to assume authority over a man; she must be quiet. <sup>13</sup> For Adam was formed first, then Eve. <sup>14</sup> And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. <sup>15</sup> But women will be saved through childbearing—if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety.”

The first observation that must be made is that this is a difficult text to interpret. It certainly resonates with Peter's comment regarding his fellow Apostle: “His letters contain some things that are hard to understand...”<sup>71</sup>

At face value, 1 Timothy 2:11-15 presents the interpreter with numerous challenges. First, women are forbidden to teach or to exercise authority over men. Yet the New Testament commends and affirms the positive value of women teaching men. Lois and Eunice taught Timothy.<sup>72</sup> Priscilla taught the learned Apollos.<sup>73</sup> Women actively prophesied in the church.<sup>74</sup> Believers were instructed to teach and learn from one another,

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<sup>70</sup> 1 Cor 11:3.

<sup>71</sup> 2 Pet 3:16.

<sup>72</sup> 2 Tim 1:5.

<sup>73</sup> Acts 18:26.

<sup>74</sup> Acts 21:19; 1 Cor 11:5.

without reference to gender.<sup>75</sup> In terms of exercising authority, Phoebe was named as a deacon in the church at Cenchrea,<sup>76</sup> and Junia was affirmed as an outstanding apostle.<sup>77</sup> Thus Paul's prohibition seems contradictory to a number of his own New Testament statements and practices.

A second, related, challenge is the meaning of *authenthein*, translated "authority."<sup>78</sup> This word occurs only once in the Greek New Testament,<sup>79</sup> here in this verse. It is entirely absent in the Greek version of the Old Testament. Yet, with such limited usage, the meaning of the word is crucial to understanding Paul's instruction in this passage. Greek words, like English words, are capable of various meanings,<sup>80</sup> and their meaning is determined by context. In the given passage, one wonders why Paul chose to use a verb that is not the ordinary New Testament word for "authority."

A third problem is the relation of verses 13-14 with Paul's prohibition in verse 12. Some have understood this to mean that men's authority/leadership over women is based on Adam being created first, and Eve's gullibility in being deceived. As mentioned earlier, the former reasoning contradicts the creation account. Adam and Eve were created equally in God's image, and commissioned equally to rule over creation. If chronological order of creation conveys superior authority, then the animal kingdom outranks human beings.

Likewise, it is problematic to view women as more gullible than men, and therefore unworthy of exercising teaching and authority over them. The Scriptures extol

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<sup>75</sup> 1 Cor 14:26; Col 3:16.

<sup>76</sup> Rom 16:1-2.

<sup>77</sup> Rom 16:7.

<sup>78</sup> 1 Tim 2:12.

<sup>79</sup> The New Testament ordinarily uses two other words meaning "to bear power", *kurieuein* or *exousiazein*.

<sup>80</sup> In *I Suffer Not a Woman to Teach: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992), Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger list four meanings for *authenthein* (p. 84) and devote a chapter (7) to exploring the various possible meanings.

wisdom in the form of a woman.<sup>81</sup> The wise woman builds her house,<sup>82</sup> and the wife of noble character is commended for speaking with wisdom and faithful instruction.<sup>83</sup> Numerous examples are found in the Bible of women showing greater wisdom than men. For example, Abigail intervenes with courage and wisdom to avert an impending disaster caused by two men who were acting foolishly.<sup>84</sup> David, in the course of events, comes to appreciate her good judgment.<sup>85</sup> Abigail's wisdom was providentially given by God to protect his emergence as Israel's greatest king. Ultimately, her wisdom prevents a catastrophe in David's life and ensures his inheritance of an eternal dynasty,<sup>86</sup> received through his descendant, Jesus Christ.<sup>87</sup>

Not only are women portrayed in the Bible as wise, but men, as well, are often depicted as vulnerable to deception. Notable examples of men being misled include the sins of Israel's founding father. Abraham deceives both Pharaoh and, later, Abimelech.<sup>88</sup> Israel's next two Patriarchs are, themselves, deceived. Isaac is tricked by Jacob,<sup>89</sup> who is in turn duped by Laban.<sup>90</sup> Jacob is further deceived by his own sons, the future tribal leaders of God's kingdom on earth, when they sell their brother into slavery in Egypt.<sup>91</sup> Samson is deceived by Delilah.<sup>92</sup> Judas is deceived by Satan.<sup>93</sup> Peter and the Apostles in the Jerusalem church are deceived by Ananias and Sapphira, but the Holy Spirit is not

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<sup>81</sup> Prov 1:20-33, 8:1-9:6.

<sup>82</sup> Prov 14:1.

<sup>83</sup> Prov 31:26.

<sup>84</sup> 1 Sam 25.

<sup>85</sup> 1 Sam 25:32-34.

<sup>86</sup> 2 Sam 7:11-16; Ps.89.

<sup>87</sup> Luke 1:30-33.

<sup>88</sup> Gen 12:20.

<sup>89</sup> Gen 27.

<sup>90</sup> Gen 29.

<sup>91</sup> Gen 37.

<sup>92</sup> Judg 16.

<sup>93</sup> Luke 23:3.

deceived.<sup>94</sup> In the full light of Scripture, men are portrayed equally as vulnerable to deception as women. It is problematic, if not chauvinistic, to claim that women are inferior to men because they are more susceptible to being deceived.

A fourth difficulty with the text is that it seems to place the responsibility of original sin on Eve. “And Adam was not the one deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner.”<sup>95</sup> Yet Paul elsewhere assigns this responsibility essentially to Adam. “For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous.”<sup>96</sup> The Apostle is consistent with this assertion in other passages: “For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man.”<sup>97</sup>

Perhaps the most perplexing problem with this passage, however, is Paul’s declaration that “women will be saved through childbearing.”<sup>98</sup> This statement directly contradicts the Apostle’s own teaching in numerous New Testament passages. For example, in Ephesians 2:8-9, he affirms the essential Christian doctrine that all believers (men and women) are saved by grace through faith, apart from works. The notion that a woman is saved by giving birth to children flies in the face of this cardinal truth, and would exclude countless women from heaven.

For all of these reasons, it is evident that 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is a difficult passage to interpret. Two conclusions are self-evident. First, it would be a significant error to treat this text as a clear passage by which to enlighten other Scriptures. On the contrary, other clear passages are needed to shed light on these problematic verses. Secondly, the

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<sup>94</sup> Acts 5:1-10.

<sup>95</sup> 1 Tim 2:14.

<sup>96</sup> Rom 5:19.

<sup>97</sup> 1 Cor 15:22.

<sup>98</sup> 1 Tim 2:15.

numerous challenges and apparent contradictions should prompt inquiry into an alternative interpretation. A careful, devoted study of these verses is needed in order to discern an understanding that makes more sense than the traditional view.

Fortunately, Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger present just such an in-depth study. Their thorough research into the ancient cultural background to Paul's instruction sheds significant light on this perplexing passage.<sup>99</sup> After a careful examination of the Greek syntax, the meaning of the words in context and the broader cultural background, the authors propose an alternative translation for 1 Timothy 2:12-13.

"I do not permit woman to teach nor to represent herself as originator of man but she is to be in conformity [with the Scriptures]...For Adam was created first, then Eve."<sup>100</sup>

The authors make a case that Paul is refuting false teaching that had infiltrated the church in Ephesus from the surrounding culture. In a society that celebrated women as primal source, Paul refutes a widespread heresy that glorified Eve as the originator of man. He does so by instructing women to conform their teaching to the revelation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

This interpretation is compelling for several reasons. It is consistent with Paul's pattern in other passages, where he first indicates a heresy and then refutes it.<sup>101</sup>

The interpretation fits well with Paul's overall purpose in 1 Timothy, to refute false teaching and to establish the church on sound doctrine.<sup>102</sup> Women, in particular, are addressed regarding false teaching.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman to Teach: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992).

<sup>100</sup> Richard Clark Kroeger and Catherine Clark Kroeger, *I Suffer Not a Woman to Teach: Rethinking 1 Timothy 2:11-15 in Light of Ancient Evidence* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1992), 103.

<sup>101</sup> Rom 3:8; 1 Cor 15:12-57; 1 Tim 4:3-5; 2 Tim 2:17-19.

<sup>102</sup> 1 Tim 1:3-10, 19-20; 4:1-8; 6:3-5, 20-21.

<sup>103</sup> 1 Tim 4:7; 5:11-15, 2 Tim 3:6-9.



The translation recommended by the Kroegers is based on a scholarly analysis of the Greek syntax and meaning of words. It makes sense in the cultural context in which it was written, for which the authors present considerable evidence from a wide range of primary sources. It further resolves the apparent contradictions in the traditional interpretation, providing a meaningful understanding of the passage which harmonizes with other, clear, biblical revelation.

For these reasons, the preferred interpretation of 1 Timothy 2:11-15 is not that Paul is prohibiting women from exercising gifts of teaching and leadership over men in the church. Rather, the Apostle is refuting false teaching. Specifically, he instructs women to refrain from teaching that Eve was the originator of man.

With this difficult passage best understood in such a light, the conclusion reached is that the New Testament affirms the full exercise of women's gifts of teaching and leadership in the church. Women should, therefore, be equipped along with men to fulfill their God-given service of leadership at every level of church ministry.

In summary, the Scriptures demonstrate the strategic value of leadership in the advance of God's kingdom, requiring leadership development for both men and women in the Church. Biblical passages pertaining to women's leadership must be interpreted based on the meaning of words in their context, with unclear texts understood in the light of clear passages. Clear scriptural principles are that, in creation, men and women are created equally in the image of God and commissioned equally to service. In Christ, men and women are spiritually equal and called equally to the mission of making disciples. Further, the Holy Spirit gifts members of the body for Christ's mission without distinction between the sexes. A case is made that the best interpretation of male

“headship” is that it conveys male-female relational unity, and that 1 Timothy 2:12 does not restrict the exercise of women’s teaching or leadership. Rather, this difficult passage is best understood to be a refutation of the false teaching that glorified Eve as the originator of man. Thus the application of sound hermeneutical principles yields the conclusion that the New Testament affirms the full exercise of women in their gifting and leadership.

## CHAPTER 3

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature pertaining to women's leadership development is diverse and extensive. This chapter provides a summary of the resources found most helpful to training women leaders for New Hope churches. Three topics are considered most relevant. A woman's personal identity, addressing various ways in which God uniquely fashions people, is essential for a woman to understand her calling as a leader. A second strategic topic is a woman's leadership strengths, addressing leadership styles that are advantageous for women. The third topic is practical issues women face in ministering to women.

#### **A Woman's Personal Identity**

The starting point for a woman to understand her personal identity as a leader is to realize her value in creation, created equally with men in the image of God and commissioned equally with men in his service. But because the Creator exercises infinite creativity, in fashioning his creation and in creating people, a woman must further understand how God has uniquely designed her for the kingdom contribution he has planned for her life.<sup>1</sup> Both secular and Christian literature inform various topics that comprise distinctive personal traits for women leaders.

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<sup>1</sup> Eph. 2:10.

## Secular Works

The two most valuable secular resources are Tom Rath's book, *Strength Finder 2.0*, and the *DiSC* profile of personality assessment developed by John Geier.

*Strength Finder 2.0* is an excellent inventory for discovering a leader's top five personal strengths. Rath's work is based on strength-based psychology, and identifies thirty four of the most common human strengths from Gallup's forty years of research and polling of ten million people. This resource has become the accepted norm in the corporate world for creating productivity and a positive work experience. Utilizing the book and an internet-based inventory, people can identify their top five personal strengths, receive an in-depth analysis of each one, and an action-planning guide for personal implementation.

*DiSC* is another industry standard utilized in the marketplace for the purpose of employee development and team building. Based on the work of physiological psychologist William Marston, writing in the second and third decades of the twentieth century, the theoretical origins investigate how people view themselves in their various environments. The resource has been used for over thirty years, and helps people build on their personal strengths. It focuses on four behavioral dimensions: *D* (Dominance); *i* (Influence); *S* (Steadiness); and *C* (Conscientiousness). "Dominance" refers to people who are direct and decisive. They are strong-willed and like accepting challenges, taking action and achieving immediate results. "Influence" describes people who are optimistic and outgoing. They are "people people" who enjoy participating on teams, sharing ideas, and energizing and entertaining others. "Steadiness" characterizes people who are sympathetic and cooperative. They like working behind the scenes, performing in

consistent and predictable ways, and being good listeners. “Conscientiousness” portrays people who are concerned and correct. They are devoted to quality and like planning ahead, systematic approaches, and checking and re-checking for accuracy.

The *DiSC* profile is available in print and web based application. It is valuable for helping women leaders understand their personal behavioral style, and how it affects others. It further helps them understand their reactions to others’ behavioral styles. The resource is designed to create positive outcomes in people working together.

### Christian Works

In addition to these two secular inventories for building on personal strengths, two Christian works are particularly valuable. Willow Creek gave the evangelical church a practical gift in Bruce Bugbee’s Network Ministry Resource, *Discover Your Spiritual Gifts the Network Way*. The book contains four assessments to identify a person’s spiritual gifts: personal experience, character traits, ministry convictions, and others’ observations. An accurate understanding of a woman leader’s spiritual gifts is essential for pursuing her God-given calling, and with over one million users this inventory has proven to be a beneficial instrument.

A second Christian work recommended for women leaders to understand their personal identity is available from Rick Warren’s Purpose Driven Resources. Written by Erik Rees, *S.H.A.P.E.: Finding and Fulfilling Your Unique Purpose in Life* is, again, biblically based and very practical. It helps women identify various dimensions of their unique personal identity, created by God and vitally related to their service and leadership. Each chapter is designed to help a person discover different elements of how

God has uniquely designed them, arranged in the acronym S H A P E: Spiritual gifts, Heart passions, natural Abilities, Personality, and Experiences in life.

### Cultural Factor

Developing women leaders in New Hope churches in Hawaii requires factoring in a cultural component when considering women's personal identity. Two particularly helpful works illumine the mindset associated with a predominately Asian culture, *Invitation to Lead*, by Paul Tokuma, and *More than Serving Tea*, by a group of five Asian American staff members with InterVarsity.

Tokuma addresses the deep-seated Confucian ideology that has been handed down and permeates family structures of American Asians. This ideology includes daughters being inferior to sons, and a culture of "toxic shame" that affects not just the individual, but the whole extended family. These cultural influences work to make Christian women in Hawaii with Asian heritage often feel insecure, reluctant to find their voice, hesitant to make decisions, and doubtful about their leadership ability. Developing these women as leaders for God's kingdom thus requires overcoming these cultural influences and helping them discover their true identity in Christ.

In this regard, *More than Serving Tea* is a valuable anthology written by Asian American women Christian leaders. They write out of their life experience, having faced the issues and moved beyond cultural and gender constraints to discover their personal identity and calling in Christ. Their stories exemplify how God can work through the ethnic identity of Asian American women to redeem their lives, set them free to use their

gifts and empower them to serve and lead. The book is thus greatly beneficial for developing women leaders for New Hope churches in Hawaii.

### **A Woman's Leadership**

Sally Helgeson's breakthrough book, *The Female Advantage*, researches companies led by women, based on the premise that women lead differently than men, yet effectively. Utilizing case studies, Helgeson observes a pattern. Women lead intuitively with a relationally-based style, from the center outwards rather than with a hierarchical structure of authority, from the top down. She defines this style as web leadership, employing the visual image of a spider's web. Characteristics of this style include open communication, collaborative work, and giving or sharing power. The author affirms that the female view that one strengthens oneself by strengthening others is finding greater acceptance, and female values of inclusion and connection are emerging as valuable leadership qualities.

Helgeson's subsequent work, *The Web of Inclusion*, details this powerful and effective model for women's leadership. She brings to the forefront a woman's innate ability to create an integrated organization which is led from the center, inclusive and collaborative in communication and decision-making. Her leadership theory is based on case studies of five diverse organizations, from a hospital to a high tech company to a large newspaper. The value of each case study is that it is detailed to the extent that one can observe the practical steps needed to move from ineffectiveness to a web leadership that produces higher levels of productivity.

In addition to the structure of leadership advantageous to a woman, developing her personal skill set is also essential. Joanna Barsh and Susie Cranston, two consultants with McKinsey and Company, focus on this in their book *How Remarkable Women Lead: The Breakthrough Model for Work and Life*. The strength of the work is the authors' five-year research and accounts of successful women leaders in the workplace. It focuses on five core elements of "centered leadership." "Meaning" refers to a woman's passion about her work, her sense of its importance and her fulfillment in doing it. "Framing" is the process of optimistically setting her thoughts so that she can be more productive. "Connecting" affirms the value of relationships in a woman's development. From the early support of parents and teachers, to mentors and friends and coworkers, a woman needs people to help her along the way. "Engaging" means taking control of your own life. "Energizing" refers to taking time to feed your soul. The personal growth of the woman leader is emphasized, with each of the five elements reinforcing each other for sustained success, energy and joy in work and life. The authors weave together leadership, performance and fulfillment into a system with behaviors, skills and actions, seeking to develop a woman personally as she works from her strengths.

Ronald Heifetz' work, *Leadership Without Easy Answers*, is referred to in detail in Chapter One for its value in the specific context of developing women leaders in the church. The author defines leadership in terms of mobilizing people to do adaptive work, diminishing the gap between values held and the reality faced. He provides practical principles for leading both with and without authority, and he identifies the central task of leaders directing an educative strategy so that the community learns new ways.



## **Practical Issues for Women Ministering to Women**

Two practical issues that are essential for women leaders are the specific challenges and needs associated with life stages, and dealing with difficult women.

Lucy Mabery-Foster addresses specific needs in the stages of a woman's life, from a Christian perspective, in an older, yet helpful work, *Women in the Church*. There are valuable chapters devoted to the needs of single women, homemakers and working women. The author expands life-stage ministry to include the needs of women in situations of grief through loss, whether by death or divorce, defining the ministry needed for each. In addition, she introduces the importance of diversity in order to be more effective to women cross-culturally.

A beneficial resource for single mothers, which represents a significant and growing demographic in the Church, is found at the web-based ministry *thelifeofasinglemom.com*. Founder Jennifer Maggio, who has authored five books on single moms, is a recognized expert. The extensive website includes resources for the local church. It includes books to start single mom ministries and support groups, a "Ministry Leaders' Corner" which includes detailed articles on single parent ministry, training volunteers, and suggestions for continual improvement. It also utilizes social media<sup>2</sup> to discuss relevant topics and offer video and podcast instruction for those who work with single parents. The website has the capacity to list and connect support groups to people in their communities.

Focus on the Family provides supportive articles at *focusonthefamily.com*. A website devoted to parenting and family, they address the single parenting issues of

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<sup>2</sup> Specifically facebook, twitter and pinterest.

custody, divorce considerations, helping children heal from divorce, and building a strong family. This is a good resource for single mothers and church workers.

The needs of women during the empty nest and senior stages of life are addressed in online magazines. Two encouraging examples are Carol Kuykendall's article for Christianity Today, *Celebrating the Empty Nest*, ([christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/churchhomeleadership/celebratingemptynest.html](http://christianitytoday.com/biblestudies/articles/churchhomeleadership/celebratingemptynest.html)) and Eileen Rife's blog for The Christian Post, *Empty Nest Moms: Could the Best Be Yet To Come?* ([blogs.christianpost.com/bindings/empty-nest-moms-could-the-best-be-yet-to-come-13476/](http://blogs.christianpost.com/bindings/empty-nest-moms-could-the-best-be-yet-to-come-13476/)). Rosselyn Staples, Pastor of Senior Adult Ministries at Elmbrook Church, provides several good articles at [justbetweenus.org](http://justbetweenus.org). Joyce Mitchell, the former leader of the Southern Baptist Convention's one-million member Women's Missionary Union, offers very practical advice for ministering to the needs of seniors in her article *A Hands on Approach to Ministering to Seniors* ([newhopedigital.com/2012/10/a-hands-on-approach-to-ministering-to-seniors/](http://newhopedigital.com/2012/10/a-hands-on-approach-to-ministering-to-seniors/)).

A valuable secular resource for the empty nest and senior living stages of Life is the AARP (American Association for Retired Persons) interactive website, [lifereimagined.aarp.org](http://lifereimagined.aarp.org). They address psychological, emotional and physical issues associated with a person's retirement years. Life Reimagined coaches retirees through six experiences: reflect (recognize where you are in life), connect (share ideas with others), explore (think of options), choose (set your direction), repackage (what is needed to get there?), and act (steps to get there). Their practical expertise can be utilized for ministry to Christian women in the senior stages of life.

A second practical issue is that of women ministering to difficult women within the church. *Leading Women Who Wound*, by Sue Edwards and Kelley Matthews, is a solid Christian text for training lay women to work alongside all types of women in the congregation. The strength of the book is that the authors integrate valuable secular contributions. For women's development, they utilize Carol Gilligan's seminal work, *In a Different Voice*, as well as *Women's Ways of Knowing*, written by Mary Belenky, Blythe Clinchy, Nancy Goldberger and Jill Tarule. When it comes to the interaction of women with other women, Edwards and Matthews pull in the well-respected work of Phyllis Chesler, *Woman's Inhumanity to Woman*. Overall, the authors provide an honest and practical resource for lay women working in women's ministry.

In summary, the literature pertaining to women's leadership development is both varied and wide-ranging. The resources selected were found most helpful for training women leaders in New Hope churches.

## CHAPTER 4

### THE RESEARCH PROCESS

The course LD 1133, Women's Leadership Development for Ministry<sup>1</sup>, was created at New Hope Christian College in order to equip women leaders in New Hope churches, and to lessen the gap between values held and actual leadership practice. Determining the priority needs for developing these women leaders was a strategic part of designing the course.

#### **Initial Survey**

The process of designing the course began with surveying active women at two churches with which the researcher had personal contact and ministry, New Hope Windward (NHW) and New Hope Kailua (NHK). A survey<sup>2</sup> was given to over sixty women at a women's event at NHW, and over forty at a NHK midweek study. On both occasions, the surveys were distributed, completed and received at the event.

The strong interest in leadership growth indicated by the initial surveys prompted the next step of developing a course for women of all New Hope Churches on Oahu. The purpose of the course was to train an initial group of women, as well as to survey a broader group of leaders in their priority needs so that an effective course could be developed. Because this was the first formal venture in developing women leaders in New Hope churches, it was important to gain insight from the women themselves.

The decision was made to utilize New Hope Christian College (NHCC) as the venue for the course. The College is centrally located and well known by all of the New

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<sup>1</sup> See Appendix B

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix C

Hope churches on the Island. NHCC was a welcome sponsor and approved a one-credit summer intensive course, which was open to College students as well as all New Hope women leaders as an audit/enrichment class. The course was designed for a total of twelve hours of instruction, three hours per morning over four consecutive days. The College advertised the course within the school, and New Hope churches on Oahu promoted it through bulletin inserts in their Sunday services. Three months of lead time were planned for advertisement and promotion.

### **Course Design**

The course was designed not merely to transmit information, but to engage women on the various topics presented. Half of the class hours were planned to be interactive. Light, personal homework was assigned each night as a basis for morning discussion. Daily handouts featuring practical helps and information were distributed. The College provided a free book on personal strengths (*Strengthfinders 2.0*), with discussion on individual results planned for the final day, in order to encourage participation and attendance. Each class began with a devotional relating to the needs of women, and ended with an uplifting power-point presentation of women in church history. The final day concluded with an inspirational, twenty-minute presentation of Christian women called “The Long Noble Line,” which included two significant Hawaiian queens who promoted Christianity in the Hawaiian Islands.

Four topics were identified from the initial surveys, as well as broader observations from women’s ministry in general and women’s leadership in New Hope churches: 1) Understanding self in light of God’s call: how has God designed women for

ministry?; 2) The Bible's teaching on women's leadership: what does God's Word reveal about women in leadership?; 3) Effective ministry to women in all life stages: what life stages do women experience and what are their corresponding needs?; and 4) Understanding a woman's personal strengths: what are the personal strengths and leadership style and how do they affect team building?

Part one consisted of biblical teaching from Genesis 1:26-28 and 2:18, 22-23, emphasizing the equality and uniqueness of male and female in creation. Rick Warren's *S.H.A.P.E.* program was utilized to help participants understand how God has designed each one uniquely for service with spiritual gifts, passions, natural abilities, personality, and experiences. The *DiSC* profile was employed to understand individual personality.

Part two examined relevant Scriptures pertaining to women's leadership. Genesis 3:1-7, the temptation of Eve, focused on the awareness of deception. A study of 1 Corinthians 11:3-12 investigated the three views of male as head, concluding that a hierarchy of authority is not the best explanation. Interpreting 1 Timothy 2:11-15 emphasized the cultural context of Paul's instruction concerning women teaching in the church.

Part three addressed the practical needs of women in all stages of life, and the ministries required to help them. Discussion featured the specific needs of single women, single moms, home-makers, including home-schooling mothers, divorced and widowed women, empty nesters and seniors.

Part four focused on personal strengths, leadership style, team-building and ministering to difficult women. Participants completed *Strength Finders 2.0* and brought their results to class for discussion. Their *DiSC* results were utilized to help discover

leadership style. Issues of Asian cultural identity, as they relate particularly to women in leadership, were considered. Characteristics of healthy teams, and how to build them, were addressed. The section concluded with helpful ways to deal with difficult women in the church.

### **Participants**

Thirty women registered and attended the course to completion. Eleven were College students, and twenty-one were church leaders. Participants' ages were as follows: twelve women were in the twenty to twenty-nine year old age group; three women were in the thirty to thirty-nine year age group; ten women were in the forty to forty-nine year age group; and five women were in the fifty to sixty years of age grouping. The dominant demographic was a combination of millennials and mid-life women.

Another characteristic of the participants was their years of ministry experience. One third (10) of the participants had less than five years of ministry experience, including two without any. One third (10) of the participants had five to ten years of experience in ministry. One sixth (5) had a range of ministry experience between twenty and thirty-five years. The remaining five participants fell in the range of eleven to fifteen years of ministry.

### **Research Procedure**

A pre-course survey and post-course survey<sup>3</sup> methodology was employed to determine priority needs for developing women leaders in New Hope churches. The pre-course survey was administered at the beginning of the first class, and revealed what

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<sup>3</sup> See Appendix C

areas of equipping women initially perceived to be of highest priority in their leadership development. Participants ranked the four topics addressed in the course in order of highest need, and were given the opportunity to list other perceived needs. The pre-course survey also surveyed the women's age group, years in ministry, and whether they served in a church or para-church ministry.

The post-course survey was given at the end of the course, and indicated what areas of leadership training addressed in the class proved to be most valuable. It included the opportunity to list a need that was not addressed in the course. Both the pre-course and post-course surveys were completed and received back in class. Research results were utilized to further design and develop the course. The observations and subsequent conclusions drawn from the course surveys are discussed in the following chapter.



## CHAPTER 5

### RESEARCH OUTCOMES

New Hope women leaders' perception of their priority needs before being equipped by the course LD 1133, Women's Leadership Development for Ministry, were compared with what they found most valuable after taking the course. Pre-course and post-course survey data was analyzed for the overall group of leaders. In addition, comparisons were made between specific age groups, and also between women with different years of ministry experience. Observations from this data, as well as comments received from the women leaders, were utilized to formulate revisions for future course design and instruction.

In comparing pre-course and post-course rankings, the women's first two choices were considered in order to make more meaningful observations.

#### **Overall Group Survey Outcomes**

##### **Pre-course ranking of priority needs for equipping**

Before taking the course, sixty percent of the New Hope women leaders indicated that their highest priority need was understanding how God has designed women for ministry. The Bible's teaching on women's leadership ranked a close second (fifty-seven percent), followed by understanding personal strengths (forty-seven percent). The lowest priority ranking was effective ministry to women in all life stages (twenty percent).

### Post-course ranking of most valuable equipping

After completing the course, seventy percent of the women indicated that understanding how God has designed women for ministry was the most valuable area of equipping. Their second ranking was understanding personal strengths (sixty percent), followed closely by the Bible's teaching on women's leadership (fifty-seven percent). Effective ministry to women of all life stages received the lowest ranking (thirteen percent).

### **Age Group Category Outcomes**

#### Students who were twenty to twenty-nine years

Twelve women aged twenty to twenty-nine were enrolled in the course. Before the course, seventy-five percent of these leaders rated their priority need for training to be understanding how God has designed women for ministry. Their second highest ranking was tied between the Bible's teaching on women's leadership (fifty percent) and understanding personal strengths (fifty percent). Their lowest ranking was effective ministry to women of all life stages (twenty-five percent).

After completing the course, this age group ranked their most valuable equipping topic was how God has designed women for ministry (eighty-three percent), followed by the Bible's teaching on women's leadership (sixty-seven percent) and understanding personal strengths (fifty percent). None in this age group listed effective ministry to women of all ages as their most valuable training.

Students who were thirty to thirty-nine years

Only three women were aged thirty to thirty-nine years. Pre-course, sixty-seven percent indicated their top two priority needs were split evenly between understanding personal strengths and effective ministry to women of all life stages. Their next ranking of need was also tied, between understanding how God has designed women for ministry and the Bible's teaching on women's leadership (thirty-three percent each).

Post-course, these leaders ranked two topics evenly as their most valuable equipping: understanding personal strengths, and how God has designed women for ministry (sixty-seven percent each). Their second ranking was also evenly split between the Bible's teaching on women's leadership, and effective ministry to women of all life stages (thirty-three percent each).

Students who were forty to forty-nine years

Ten women aged forty to forty-nine were enrolled in the course. Before the class, 60 percent of these women listed their top priority need for equipping to be a tie between the Bible's teaching on women's leadership, and understanding personal strengths. Their second ranking of need was also split between understanding how God has designed women for ministry, and effective ministry to women of all life stages (forty percent each).

These women indicated that their most valuable equipping in the course was understanding personal strengths (seventy percent), followed by a tie between understanding how God has designed women for ministry and the Bible's teaching on

women's leadership (sixty percent each). Their lowest ranking was effective ministry to women of all life stages (ten percent).

Students who were fifty to sixty years

There were five women aged fifty to sixty years. Before taking the course, eighty percent of these women indicated their highest need for equipping was the Bible's teaching on women's leadership. Their second ranking was understanding how God has designed women for ministry (sixty percent), followed by effective ministry to women of all life stages (forty percent), then understanding personal strengths (twenty percent).

After taking the course, sixty percent of these women valued two topics equally as most valuable: the Bible's teaching on women's leadership, and understanding how God has designed women for ministry. Their next ranking was also tied, between effective ministry to women of all ages and understanding personal strengths (forty percent each).

### **Ministry Experience Category Outcomes**

Up to five years of ministry experience

For the ten women leaders with less than five years of ministry experience, seventy percent indicated that their top need was tied between understanding personal strengths and understanding how God has designed women for ministry. The next ranking was also evenly split, between understanding personal strengths and effective ministry to women of all stages in life (thirty percent each).

Following the course, seventy percent of the women rated both understanding personal strengths, and how God has designed women for ministry, equally as their most

valuable training. Their next ranking was understanding the Bible's teaching on women's leadership (fifty percent), followed by effective ministry to women of all life stages (ten percent).

#### Five to ten years of ministry experience

Before taking the course, eighty percent of the ten women leaders who had five to ten years of ministry experience listed the Bible's teaching on women's leadership as their top need, followed by understanding how God has designed women for ministry (fifty percent), then effective life stages to women of all life stages (forty percent). Their final ranking was understanding personal strengths (thirty percent).

These women found their most valuable equipping in the course to be how God has designed women for ministry (eighty percent), followed by the Bible's teaching on women's leadership (sixty percent), and understanding personal strengths (fifty percent). Their lowest ranking was effective ministry to women of all life stages (ten percent).

#### Eleven to fifteen years of ministry experience

Before the course, eighty percent of the five women who had eleven to fifteen years of ministry experience indicated that their top need was the Bible's teaching on women's leadership, followed by understanding how God has designed women for ministry (sixty percent), understanding personal strengths (forty percent), and effective ministry to women of all life stages (twenty percent).

After the course, eighty percent of these leaders listed their most valuable training a tie between how God has designed women for ministry, and the Bible's teaching on

women's leadership. Their next ranking was understanding personal strengths (forty percent). None of the women in this category indicated that one of their two most valuable topics was effective ministry to women in all life stages.

#### Over fifteen years of ministry experience

Before taking the course, sixty percent of the five women who had over fifteen years of ministry experience stated that their top need for equipping was a tie between understanding personal strengths, and effective ministry to women of all life stages. Their next highest ranking was also a tie between the Bible's teaching on women's leadership, and how God has designed women for ministry (forty percent each).

These women were evenly split in rating their most valuable topic of training in the course, between the Bible's teaching on women's leadership, and understanding personal strengths (sixty percent each). Their second ranking was also tied, between effective ministry to women of all life stages, and understanding how God has designed women for ministry (forty percent each).

#### **Overall Group: Pre-course and Post-course Survey Comparison**

A comparison of the women's ranking of priority needs before the leadership development course and their listing of most valuable topics after the course yields four major observations. First, the leaders' initial perception of their priority need for understanding how God has designed women for ministry was validated by their post-course indication that this was the most valuable part of their equipping. Sixty percent of the leaders indicated that this topic was one of their two top needs before the course, and

this number increased to seventy percent who found it their most valuable training in the course.

Second, the women's pre-course sense of need to be equipped in the Bible's teaching on women's leadership was affirmed by their strong post-course ranking. Fifty seven percent listed it as one of their top two needs, and the same number rated it as one of their top two valuable topics in the course.

Third, the women's pre-course awareness of their need to understand their personal strengths was strengthened by the experience of being equipped in the course. Initially, forty seven percent of the leaders listed this topic as one of their two top priority needs. But their post-course response showed that they came to value this equipping in a greater measure, as sixty percent indicated it as one of their two most valuable topics of training.

The final observation is that, with the course's impact of increasing the women's value of being equipped in personal areas of ministry (how God has designed women for ministry, and personal strengths), their priority decreased for being equipped in effective ministry to women of all life stages. Initially, thirty seven percent listed this topic as one of their two top needs. But after the course, the number decreased to thirteen percent.

### **Age Categories: Pre-course and Post-course Comparison**

For women aged twenty to twenty-nine years, the experience of taking the course slightly increased their top value of understanding how God has designed women for ministry (from seventy-five percent need to eighty-three percent most valuable

equipping). An increase was also indicated in their value of the Bible's teaching on women's leadership (from fifty percent need to sixty-seven percent most valued).

Leaders aged thirty to thirty-nine years showed much the same perception of need going into the course with what they valued in their training. Their top ranking remained understanding personal strengths (sixty-seven percent both before and after the course). But their ranking of how God has designed women for ministry rose (from thirty-three percent to sixty-seven percent), with a corresponding decrease in effective ministry to women of all life stages.

Women aged forty to forty-nine years also showed an increased value of how God has designed women for ministry (from forty percent before the course to sixty percent after the course). They also registered a higher value for understanding personal strengths (sixty percent to seventy percent). Their ranking of the Bible's teaching on women's leadership remained strong (sixty percent both before and after the course).

Leaders aged fifty to sixty years showed an increase in their value of understanding personal strengths (from twenty percent before the course to forty percent afterwards). Their ranking of the Bible's teaching on women's leadership decreased, but remained strong (from eighty percent to sixty percent). Their ranking of how God has designed women for ministry also remained strong (sixty percent before and after the course).

### **Ministry Experience Categories: Pre-course and Post-course Comparison**

Women with under five years of ministry experience showed a strong consistency in their top perception of need and the equipping they valued in the course. They ranked



highest the topics of how God has designed women for ministry and understanding personal strengths (seventy percent each), both in the pre-course and post-course survey. Their ranking of the Bible's teaching on women increased, from thirty percent to fifty percent.

Leaders with five to ten years of ministry experience showed an increase in their value of how God has designed women for ministry (from fifty percent pre-survey to eighty percent post-survey). Understanding personal strengths also rose, from thirty percent to fifty percent. The Bible's teaching on women decreased in ranking, but remained strong (eighty percent pre-survey, sixty percent post-survey).

Women with eleven to fifteen years ministry experience showed a strong consistency in rating their need and valuing their training. The Bible's teaching on women's leadership remained the highest ranking, with eighty percent survey results both before and after the course. How God has designed women for ministry rose in ranking, from sixty percent pre-survey to eighty percent post-survey, whereas understanding personal strengths remained the same (forty percent before and after the course).

Leaders with over fifteen years of experience in ministry also showed a significant consistency in their pre-survey and post-survey data. Their highest ranking both before and after the course was understanding personal strengths (sixty percent). How God has designed women for ministry remained the same (forty percent), whereas understanding the Bible's teaching on women's leadership rose from forty percent to sixty percent.

### **How the Outcomes Will Affect Practices**

The first insight gleaned from the project is to prioritize training the women leaders in personal areas of ministry, namely, how God has designed women for ministry, and personal strengths. All of the topics proved valuable, but the strong correlation between the women's initial sense of priority need for equipping in how God has designed women for ministry and their post-course ranking of the value of this topic indicates it is worth emphasizing.

The increase of the women's value of training in personal strengths, from their initial perception of this need, shows the importance of another personal area of equipping. However, even though it is not a personal topic, the Bible's teaching on women's leadership showed a strong ranking both before and after the course.

A second lesson emerging from the study is to expand the course to a three-hour credit class. Comments received on the post-course survey indicated the value of the subjects covered, as well as a desire to study them more deeply. More personal application of the topics, such as what to do with personal strengths once they are discovered, was requested. Other subjects of interest and need were brought to light during class discussions, and reflected in post-course comments. These included the dynamic of women working alongside men ("How do women leaders interact with men leaders?", "How do women work with difficult men?", "How do I co-lead with my husband?" etc.). They also included a wide-ranging series of topics such as women and power, self-esteem and insecurity, forgiveness when dealing with difficult women, mentoring, biblical marriage, and leadership and spiritual warfare. All of these factors

warrant expanding the course to study the current topics more deeply and include more areas of equipping.

A third take-away from the project is to continue the course design. The sessions were planned to be highly interactive, and student comments overwhelmingly affirmed the value of this dynamic. Features included pacing the class to allow ample discussion and participation in between informational lectures. Homework was practical and involved self-discovery through a short daily response paper, which consisted of what was the most important thing learned and why. A daily devotion to start the class affirmed the women's personal value to God. Topics of greater perceived relevance were placed at the beginning of the course in order to encourage continued attendance throughout the week (attendance turned out to be one hundred percent for all students). The course concluded with an uplifting power point presentation, "The Long Noble Line of Christian Women." The twenty-five minute presentation traced women leaders starting from Priscilla to modern day Joni Erickson Tada and Christine Caine. Women were greatly encouraged that they are part of something bigger in God's kingdom, and that God raises up common women to lead in significant ways. Many of the course participants commented that this session was a highlight of the class.

A fourth lesson learned from the study is to give students the opportunity to choose from a variety of assignments that would allow growth in a particular area of interest or need. Although the overall group of women showed a significant commonality in their need for training, some differences in their age groups and their years of experience in ministry warrants designing some work to address those differences.

For example, women aged forty to forty-nine years rated understanding personal strengths as their top need before the course, and also that they valued it most after the course. They were the only age category reflecting this emphasis, which would suggest offering a class assignment affording the opportunity for these women to pursue personal development in that area.

Women aged fifty to sixty years showed a consistent high need and value for the Bible's teaching on women's leadership, perhaps revealing a generational lack of equipping on this topic. A similar pattern was observed with women having five to ten years of experience in ministry, and also those having eleven to fifteen years of ministry. Providing the opportunity through a class assignment for specialized work in that area of need would enhance the course for these women.

### **What Still Needs to be Researched**

By the women's responses, the course proved valuable in equipping them for leadership. Further research of value would be a follow-up survey investigating the application of their learning to their particular ministry. What topic proved to be the most helpful? How is their personal development in leadership skills affecting their ministry? What challenges are being faced? The true test is the practical outworking of training received in the real-life experience of ministry. A follow-up survey to be administered after six months is being developed.

### **What Questions Remain to be Answered**

Women leaders in New Hope churches do have a shared history in their needs for personal growth in leadership. At the same time, what role do various cultural factors play in these women's leadership development?

Books have addressed specific issues for Asian women, such as insecurity and finding one's voice. These were confirmed by class discussions. But that raises the question, do other ethnicities have specific issues that pertain to women in Christian leadership? If so, are they being addressed?

Another question that emerges from this project relates to context. Is the course valuable for training women in other settings? Are the concepts transferable? Requests for the course have been received from the women's prison on Oahu, as well as a church in Sydney, Australia. It is presumed that the core of the course will relate well to women in other contexts, but modifications will surely need to be made.

## APPENDIX A

### DOES MALE HEADSHIP MEAN AUTHORITY IN MARRIAGE?

When *kephale* is interpreted as authority in the other “headship” passage, Ephesians 5:23, the meaning does not fit well, either. Paul is urging believers in this text to “be filled with the Spirit.”<sup>1</sup> He describes the Spirit-filled life with four phrases, each beginning with a participle.<sup>2</sup> Paul then proceeds to apply the last of these four participles, “being subject to one another in the fear of Christ,” to the marriage relationship. His instruction to wives in 5:22 does not contain a verb, but the action of subjection or submission is carried over from the participle in 5:21, and directed toward her husband. In this verse, 5:22, the husband is stated to be the *kephale* of the wife.

The immediate context, then, clearly indicates that marriage is to be an application of Spirit-filled, mutual submission. The wife is called to submit to her husband, seeking his needs and interests above her own. In all relationships, but especially in marriage, the essence of love is seeking the benefit of the other.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the husband is called to love his wife “...just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her.”<sup>4</sup> Christ’s sacrificial death on the Cross was not for his needs, but rather for the needs of his bride, the Church. In the same way, husbands are exhorted to love their wives in a sacrificial manner that meets her needs. In that sense, he submits his life to hers.

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<sup>1</sup> Eph 5:18.

<sup>2</sup> Eph 5:19-21. The New American Standard Bible translates these participles clearly: 1) “speaking...”; 2) “singing...”; 3) “giving thanks...”; and 4) “[being] subject to...” The NIV breaks up the long sentence, but loses the clarity of the grammatical relationship between the participles and the imperative (“be filled with the Spirit”) in the Greek text.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Cor 13:4-7.

<sup>4</sup> Eph 5:25.

The relationship of marriage is thus a Spirit-filled, loving harmony of mutual submission. Whatever the meaning of *kephale* is for a husband's relationship with his wife, it is clearly described in this passage in terms of sacrificial love in a relationship of mutual submission. The concept of a husband's authority over his wife, whose submission is based on her inferior rank, is foreign to the portrait of marriage painted. Marriage is portrayed as the mutual submission of two spouses, under the authority and empowerment of the loving Spirit of Christ, for each other's mutual benefit.

The meaning of *kephale* as "authority," then, does not fit well in Ephesians 5:23.

### **Does Male as "Head" Mean Relational Unity in Marriage?**

The relationship between husband and wife is one of unity,<sup>5</sup> a loving harmony of mutual submission empowered by the Holy Spirit. Paul's second standard for a husband's devotion to his wife in this passage is in perfect concert with this view, as men are exhorted to "love their wives as their own bodies."<sup>6</sup> In the relationship of head/body unity, the head "... who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body..."<sup>7</sup> Paul appeals to the natural unity of the head and body to make his point: a head/husband who cares for his body/wife provides benefits for her. At the same time he benefits himself because of their essential unity.

The relational dynamics within marriage of submission and sacrifice, and respect and love, reflect the organic unity conveyed in the physical imagery of head and body.

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<sup>5</sup> Eph 5:23.

<sup>6</sup> Eph 5:28.

<sup>7</sup> Eph 5:28-29.

Indeed, marriage is designed by God for a man and a woman to become “one flesh.”<sup>8</sup>

Significantly, Paul quotes this text in portraying Christian marriage as a relational unity pictured by head and body.<sup>9</sup>

Interestingly, Paul’s comparison of marriage to the relationship between Christ and the Church harmonizes with *kephale* meaning relational harmony. Christ is not specified as the head in these verses. Yet the Church is identified as the body, “... for we are members of his body,” and the analogy indicates that Christ is the head. His relationship with the body is portrayed in terms of organic unity, not authority. “After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of his body.”<sup>10</sup> This is not to say that Christ does not possess authority over the Church, but rather that the meaning of his headship to the Church in this passage is described in terms of the natural care pictured by head/body unity.

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<sup>8</sup> Gen 2:24.

<sup>9</sup> Eph 5:31.

<sup>10</sup> Eph 5:29-30.



APPENDIX B  
COURSE SYLLABUS

**NEW HOPE CHRISTIAN COLLEGE**

LD 1133: Women's Leadership Development for Ministry, (1 Credit)

June 18 – 21 2013; Tuesday – Friday, 9:00am -12:00noon

Instructor: Martha Stinton

Phone: 808.225.6947

Email: marthastinton@newhope.edu

Course Description

This class will focus on four crucial areas for women to learn and grow for ministry. Understanding ourselves in light of God's call; identifying key biblical passages pertaining to women; learning leadership styles and teambuilding; discerning the life stages of women and their corresponding needs.

Course Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:

- Understand womanhood as God designed it for marriage and ministry.
- Learn what Scriptures says about women and ministry.
- Effectively minister to women in each major life-stage.
- Develop aptitude in leading from your personal strengths.

Course Requirements

- Daily attendance and participation, which includes sharing of journaled insights from the previous day.  
The journal will record your thoughts: "what am I learning?" (facts, principles, values) and "What difference will this make in my life and ministry?"
- Completing *Strength Finder 2.0* on your computer and bringing the results to class on Thursday.
- For Credit Students: Reading *Unleashing the Power of Rubber Bands* or *Gifted for Leadership*, and turning in the reflection paper to the Pac Rim Office on the due date listed below.

Required Reading

- *Strength Finder 2.0*. Book provided in class.  
This book will be handed out in class on the first day. The results will need to be brought to class on day 3 for an integrative discussion on personal leadership and teambuilding.

**For those taking the class for credit: Choose 1 of the following books:**

- *Unleashing the Power of Rubber Bands*, Nancy Ortberg
- *Gifted for Leadership*, Nancy Beach

### Required Coursework for Credit Students

A five page reflection paper is required and submitted by **5pm, July 19<sup>th</sup>**.

### Class Schedule:

#### Tuesday:

9:00-9:25 am – Intro & Survey Instructions  
9:30-10:30 am – Understanding Ourselves  
10:45am-12:00 noon – Creation Account-Adam/Eve

#### Wednesday:

9:00-9:20am – Review of journal insights from Tuesday  
9:30-10:30am – NT Scriptures on Women  
10:45am-12:00 noon – NT Scriptures on Women

#### Thursday:

9:00-9:20am – Review of journal insights from Wed.  
9:30-10:30am – Leadership Styles/Strength Finder results  
10:45am-12:00 noon – Teambuilding/Difficult Women

#### Friday:

9:00-9:30am – Review of journal insights from Thursday  
9:40-10:40am – Needs of Women in Life's Stages  
10:50-11:20am – “The Long Noble Line”

A visual history of Christian women

11:30am-12:00 noon – Questions, Survey & Farewell

### Grading for credit students:

Grade Distribution	
Attendance & Participation	30%
Strengthfinder 2.0	10%
Journal	20%
Book Report	40%

PRCC Grading Scale			
97.5-100	A+	72.6-77.4	C
92.6-97.4	A	70-72.5	C-
90-92.5	A-	67.5-69.9	D+
87.5-89.9	B+	62.6-67.4	D
82.6-87.4	B	60-62.5	D-
80-82.5	B-	59.9 and lower	F
77.5-79.9	C+	Withdraw/Fail	W/F
		Withdraw/Pass	W/P

### Attendance

See PRCC attendance policy in the Student Handbook. If a student misses more than 20% of the total number of class hours (2hrs 40mins) the student will be administratively withdrawn, and a W/F grade will be assigned, equivalent to an F for computing grade point average. Try to avoid missing sessions, even for legitimate reasons. Please arrange any details with the Instructor as much ahead of time as possible.

### Late Work

Late assignments will be penalized by 5% per weekday (25% per week). After two weeks, the penalties stop accumulating. Extenuating circumstances will be taken into consideration on a case-by-case basis.

### Incompletes

No work will be accepted after the end of the summer except under unusual circumstances. In the case of significant emergencies, such as hospitalization or death in the family, the student may request an incomplete from the Academic Dean. An incomplete agreement will allow additional time to complete required course work (see NHCC catalog).

APPENDIX C  
SPIRITUAL FORMATION QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Did you become a Christian through New Hope? \_\_\_\_ If not, what church or circumstances? \_\_\_\_\_.
2. How long have you been walking with the Lord?  
\_\_\_\_ 5 years or less; \_\_\_\_ 6-10 yrs; \_\_\_\_ 11-20 yrs; \_\_\_\_ over 20 yrs?
3. What age group do you fit into? \_\_\_\_ 20-30; \_\_\_\_ 31-40; \_\_\_\_ 41-50; \_\_\_\_ 51-60; \_\_\_\_ over 60
4. Were you raised in a Christian home or attended Sunday School as a child?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
5. Do you attend church regularly? (at least 2 times a month or more)  
\_\_\_\_\_.
6. How long have you been attending church regularly, including churches other than NHW/NHK \_\_\_\_\_ Please list the name or denomination of the churches.  
\_\_\_\_\_.
7. What ways have been the most effective for your spiritual growth? (i.e., sermons, serving on a team, devos, Bible studies, exercising gifts, etc.) Be specific!  
\_\_\_\_\_.
8. What aspects of your faith in Christ would you like to know more about?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
9. Have you ever, or are you currently leading a small group, serving team or ministry?  
\_\_\_\_\_. If yes, what \_\_\_\_\_.
10. Have you ever, or are you currently attending a small group?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
11. Do you desire to grow in the area of spiritual leadership?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
12. Are you satisfied in your current ministry?  
\_\_\_\_\_.
13. Have you ever desired to work in a ministry that seems “out of reach”? If so, what is it? \_\_\_\_\_.

14. Have you completed your spiritual gifts and passions inventory, or SHAPE?  
\_\_\_\_\_. What are they? \_\_\_\_\_.

Are you operating in it? \_\_\_\_\_.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Age: \_\_\_\_\_

**Optional Information:**

Education: \_\_\_\_\_

Profession: \_\_\_\_\_

Marital Status: \_\_\_ single; \_\_\_ married; \_\_\_ divorced; \_\_\_ widowed

Age of children at home: \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional comments you would like to add:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX D  
COURSE PRE-SURVEY AND POST SURVEY

**Course Pre-survey**

Please consider how the following topics would equip you to serve as a leader in ministry. Then rate them *in order of priority* according to your personal need in your journey of growth and development.

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. I'm looking forward to all that we will learn together in this course.

- A. Understanding myself in light of God's call: how has God designed women for ministry?
- B. The Bible's teaching on women's leadership: what does God's Word reveal about women in leadership?
- C. Effective ministry to women in all life stages: what life stages do women experience and what are their corresponding needs?
- D. Understanding my personal strengths: what are my personal strengths and leadership style and how do they affect teambuilding?

The topics that would best equip me for leadership in ministry are (*please list the letter above*):

1. First priority \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

2. Second priority \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

3. Third priority \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

4. Fourth priority \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

5. Another need I have for being equipped as a leader, which is not listed above, is the following:

I would rate this need in the following priority, along with those listed above:

*(please circle one)*

- 1) My greatest need.
- 2) My second greatest need.
- 3) My third greatest need.
- 4) My fourth greatest need.
- 5) My fifth greatest need.

Age: *check mark the appropriate square*

[20-29] [30-39] [40-49] [50-59] [over 60]

Years in Ministry \_\_\_\_\_ (serving in a church or Christian organization)

### **Course Post-survey**

Consider the following topics covered in the course. Please rate them in terms of how valuable they were in equipping you to serve as a leader in ministry.

- A. Understanding myself in light of God's call: how has God designed women ministry?
- B. The Bible's teaching on women's leadership: what does God's Word reveal about women in leadership?
- C. Effective ministry to women in all life stages: what life stages do women experience and what are their corresponding needs?
- D. Understanding my personal strengths: what are my personal strengths and leadership style and how do they affect teambuilding?

The topics that best equipped me for leadership in ministry are (please list the letter above):

1. Most valuable \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

2. Second most valuable \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

3. Third most valuable \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

4. Fourth most valuable \_\_\_\_\_

Why?

5. Another topic I believe would be helpful for me in being equipped as a leader, which is not listed above, is the following:

I would rate this need in the following priority, along with those listed above:

*(please circle one)*

- 1) My greatest need.
- 2) My second greatest need.
- 3) My third greatest need.
- 4) My fourth greatest need.
- 5) My fifth greatest need.

Age: *check mark the square below that applies*

[20-29] [30-39] [40-49] [50-59] [over 60]

Years in ministry \_\_\_\_\_ (serving in a church or Christian organization)

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